

Seizure first aid

Stay calm. Make space. Time it.

During and after a convulsive seizure

1. Stay nearby and clear hazards. Move the person only if they are in danger.
2. Protect their head with something soft; loosen tight neckwear.
3. Time the episode. Do not restrain them or put anything in their mouth.
4. After jerking stops, put them on their side and stay until they recover.
5. Give no food or drink until they have fully recovered.

Call 999 in the UK

For a first seizure; one lasting longer than usual or more than five minutes when the usual duration is unknown; repeated seizures without recovery; serious injury; trouble breathing afterwards; or recovery that is not as usual.

If breathing is not normal after the seizure, call 999 and follow the call handler's resuscitation instructions.

Not every seizure involves shaking

Someone may stare, become confused or wander. Gently guide them away from hazards and stay with them. Note the episode and recovery for their care team.

Follow an individual care plan when you know it and have the required training. Outside the UK, use the local emergency number.

Source: NHS seizure first aid

Source: CDC seizure first aid

General information. Checked 9 September 2026.